

## Message Text

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TAGS: AORG, IAEA

SUBJECT: UN COORDINATION: COMMITTEE ON PROGRAM AND  
COORDINATION - DEBATES UN INFORMATION SYSTEMS - DELEGATION  
REPORT NO. 1

SUMMARY: CPC REVIEW OF UN INFORMATION SYSTEMS OPENED WITH  
LUCID, FRANK EXPOSITION BY IOB SECRETARIAT DIRECTOR  
WRIGLEY. IN HIS STATEMENT AND RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS,  
WRIGLEY ACKNOWLEDGED THAT IOB HAD GONE IN WRONG DIRECTION  
DURING 1970-76 PERIOD, BUT SAID IT HAD TURNED A CORNER  
SINCE THEN. COMMITTEE GENERALLY APPROVED WRIGLEY'S  
REPORT AND PROJECTED ACTION PROGRAM FOR CURRENT  
BIENNIUM, SUGGESTING, HOWEVER, SOME CHANGES IN PRIORITIES.  
FAILURE OF SOME SPECIALIZED AGENCIES TO PARTICIPATE IN  
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WORK OF IOB WAS QUESTIONED AND IAEA WAS SPECIFICALLY  
REBUKED. END SUMMARY

1. COMMITTEE FOR PROGRAM AND COORDINATION (CPC) DEVOTED  
AFTERNOON AUGUST 28 AND MOST OF AUGUST 29 MORNING  
SESSION TO UN INFORMATION SYSTEMS. IOB DIRECTOR WRIGLEY  
INTRODUCED TOPIC (E/AC/51/90) AND SAID THAT IOB, AS NOW

SET UP, CAN ONLY ACCUMULATE KNOWLEDGE ABOUT INFORMATION SYSTEMS WITHIN UN FAMILY AND SUGGEST ALTERNATIVE POLICIES. HE EMPHASIZED THAT CHOICES AND IMPLEMENTATION REST WITH UN AGENCIES AND INTER-GOVERNMENTAL BODIES, SUCH AS THE CPC. WRIGLEY DESCRIBED RECENTLY ISSUED IOB INVENTORIES OF UN INFORMATION SYSTEMS AND SAID THEIR CONTENT SHOWED IRREGULAR DEVELOPMENT OF UN INFORMATION SYSTEMS, MIXED QUALITY OF PRODUCTS AND SERVICES THEY OFFER, LACK OF COHERENCE AND CAPACITY TO MEET UN'S MULTI-DISCIPLINARY REQUIREMENTS, AND ABSENCE OF UNIFORM METHOD OF INDEXING OR CLASSIFYING DOCUMENTATION PRODUCED BY UN AGENCIES. WRIGLEY SAID UN NEEDS TO DEVELOP CAPACITY, COORDINATED WITH SYSTEMS EXTERNAL TO UN, TO RESPOND "AT A WORLD LEVEL TO SECTORAL AND INTER-SECTORAL" INFORMATION REQUIREMENTS. ADDITIONALLY, UN INFORMATION SYSTEMS NEED TO BE MUTUALLY COMPATIBLE, COMPATIBLE WITH EXTERNAL SYSTEMS, ELIMINATE OVERLAPS, DEVELOP A CONSOLIDATED DATA BASE WHICH WOULD IDENTIFY ALL UN DOCUMENTS, PROMOTE SYSTEMS AND SERVICES EVOLVED BY UN AGENCIES, AND INSURE THAT DEVELOPMENT OF UN INFORMATION SYSTEMS KEEPS UP WITH MODERN TECHNOLOGY. WRIGLEY POINTED OUT THAT THE DIRECTORY OF INFORMATION AND ADMINISTRATIVE SYSTEMS PRODUCED BY THE IOB SHOWED A GREAT VARIETY AMONG THEM AND SERIOUS PROBLEMS IN "AGGREGATING DATA ACROSS ORGANIZATIONS IN ALL FIELDS COVERED BY THE INVENTORY." WRIGLEY SAID IT WOULD BE DIFFICULT, HOWEVER, TO INTRODUCE UNCLASSIFIED

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UNIFORMITY BUT THAT ITS INTRODUCTION WOULD GIVE A BETTER PICTURE OF THE ACTUAL ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS OF THE UN, WOULD ENCOURAGE THE DEVELOPMENT OF COMMON SYSTEMS OF COSTING, MIGHT REALIZE ECONOMIES OF SCALE IN ADMINISTRATIVE OPERATIONS, AND WOULD PROMOTE CROSS-SECTORAL PROGRAM ANALYSIS. WRIGLEY CONCLUDED BY DESCRIBING PROGRAM PLANNED FOR INTERORGANIZATIONAL PROJECT REGISTER (CORE) IN CURRENT BIENNIUM, AND HE WARNED THAT ONSET OF TECHNOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENTS, SUCH AS MINI COMPUTERS, CALLS FOR CAREFUL CONTROL BY UN MANAGERS TO PREVENT FURTHER FRAGMENTATION OF INFORMATION SYSTEMS WITH ATTENDANT BALLOONING OF OVERHEAD COSTS.

2. ENSUING DEBATE PROCEEDED ON TWO LEVELS, WITH LDCS ENDEAVORING TO ESTABLISH DIRECT BENEFIT TO THEMSELVES OF IOB'S ACTIVITIES AND DCS GENERAL ENDORSING IOB'S EFFORTS AT RATIONALIZATION OF UN INFORMATION SYSTEMS. BOTH GROUPS ASKED ABOUT COSTS OF INFORMATION SYSTEMS, LDCS BECAUSE THEY WANTED TO KNOW HOW MUCH WAS BEING DIVERTED FROM DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS, AND DCS BECAUSE OF THEIR CONCERN FOR REDUCING OVERHEADS. USSR COMPLIMENTED IOB ON USEFUL WORK IT HAD

COMPLETED, BUT CRITICIZED IT FOR BEING TOO PASSIVE.  
SOVIET DEL GENERALLY SUPPORTED GIVING IOB GREATER  
IMPORTANCE AND CALLED UPON ACC TO GIVE REQUISITE  
PRIORITY TO ITS MANDATE.

3. US STATEMENT EMPHASIZED IMPORTANCE WE ATTACH TO WORK  
OF IOB, COMMENDED WRIGLEY'S REPORT AND WARMLY WELCOMED  
THREE DIRECTORIES OF UN INFORMATION SYSTEMS. US SAID  
THAT PARAGRAPH 47 OF E/AC/51/90 COULD WELL SERVE AS A  
SUCCINCT DEFINITION OF THE GOAL OF THE IOB AND ENDORSED  
STATEMENT IN PARA 96 THAT GOVERNMENTAL SUPPORT IS  
CRITICAL TO IOB'S ATTAINMENT OF ITS MANDATE. US ASKED  
WRIGLEY TO IDENTIFY AGENCIES WHICH DO NOT PARTICIPATE  
IN WORK OF IOB (PARAS 75 AND 76); INQUIRED WHY INDEX  
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(PARA 52) WAS NOT HIGHER IN IOB'S SCHEME OF PRIORITIES  
FOR 78-79 (PARA 99); ASKED WRIGLEY TO ELABORATE ON HIS  
CAUTION REGARDING MINI COMPUTORS; AND STATED THAT HIS  
INTRODUCTORY REMARKS HAD USEFULLY IDENTIFIED SEVERAL  
SHORTCOMINGS IN PRESENT ADMINISTRATIVE SYSTEMS OF UN  
AND UN AGENCIES, CORRECTION OF WHICH SHOULD IMPROVE  
EFFECTIVENESS OF ORGANIZATION IN REALIZING OBJECTIVES.

4. US AND SEVERAL OTHER DELEGATIONS ASKED AGENCIES  
REPRESENTED AT MEETING TO ACCOUNT FOR THEIR LACK OF  
PARTICIPATION IN IOB. IAEA REP WAS ONLY ONE TO RESPOND,  
AND HE REPLIED WITH LENGTHY DESCRIPTION OF IAEA'S FIVE  
INFORMATION SYSTEMS, EACH OF WHICH HE SAID WAS PARTICULAR  
TO THAT AGENCY'S NEEDS AND IN IAEA'S JUDGMENT  
WAS OF NO USE TO UN SYSTEM GENERALLY. IAEA HAD FOR  
THIS REASON, AND ALSO IN INTERESTS OF SECURITY OF  
CERTAIN SENSITIVE TECHNICAL INFORMATION, DECIDED NOT  
TO PARTICIPATE IN IOB. GHANA PROMPTLY DENOUNCED  
IAEA REP'S STATEMENT AS ARROGANT AND UNACCEPTABLE.

5. CPC HAD CONSIDERABLE DIFFICULTY DECIDING WHAT  
TO DO WITH IOB REPORT AND WRIGLEY'S REMARKS, BUT  
FINALLY CONCLUDED THAT IT SHOULD CALL FOR (A) RE-  
EXAMINATION OF PRIORITIES, (B) CLOSER COOPERATION  
OF AGENCIES WITH IOB, AND (C) PERIODIC REPORTS FROM  
ACC OF IOB'S ACTIVITIES.

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